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Letter dated 29 August 2003 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to convey the attached communication, dated 26 August 2003, which I have received from the Secretary-General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would bring it to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Kofi A. **Annan**

03-48481 (E) 020903

Annex

Letter dated 26 August 2003 from the Secretary-General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization addressed to the Secretary-General

In accordance with Security Council resolution 1088 (1996), I attach the monthly report on SFOR operations for July 2003. I would appreciate your making this report available to the Security Council.

(*Signed*) George **Robertson**

Enclosure

Monthly report to the Security Council on the operations of the Stabilization Force

1. Over the reporting period (1-31 July 2003), the total strength of the Stabilization Force (SFOR) was 11,458, including 766 troops from non-NATO countries. In addition, there were 54 SFOR personnel posted in Croatia.

Status of partner/non-NATO contributing countries

2. On 9 July 2003, the North Atlantic Council welcomed the offer by Chile to contribute to SFOR as part of the United Kingdom contingent, and authorized SHAPE to begin the process of certification.

3. On 10 July 2003, the Slovakian authorities announced that the SFOR Slovakian Air Force contingent would remain until the end of 2004 and withdraw thereafter.

4. On 14 July 2003, the Finnish Civil Military Cooperation Company left Bosnia and Herzegovina, thus ending the Finnish military presence in the country.

5. On 21 July 2003, the Danish contingent left Bosnia and Herzegovina, thereby ending the Danish military presence in the country.

Security situation

6. Over the reporting period, the overall security situation remained stable.

Suspected bank accounts

7. On 7 July 2003, the High Representative for Bosnia and Herzegovina froze the bank accounts of 14 individuals in the country, all suspected of helping indicted war criminals to evade arrest. At a press conference in Sarajevo, the High Representative stated that this was one more step taken by the "coalition against crime", which included the United States Administration, the European Union, the Office of the High Representative, SFOR, the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia and local partners in the region.

Removal of the VRS Fifth Corps Commander

8. On 8 July 2003, the Commander of SFOR directed the removal from active service of the Commander of the Fifth Corps of the Republika Srpska Army (VRS), owing to his responsibility for the storage of illegal weapons discovered at a site in Han Pijesak on 13 June 2003.

Eighth anniversary of the Srebrenica massacre

9. On 11 July 2003, a memorial ceremony commemorating the Srebrenica massacre was held in Potocari, without incident. An estimated 10,000 people attended the ceremony and, for the first time since the massacre, the authorities of the Republika Srpska appointed a delegation to attend the ceremony, headed by the Prime Minister.

10. Attendance at the ceremony was nearly three times larger than in the two previous years, which may be considered an indication that Bosniacs feel safer travelling across the Inter-Entity Boundary Line and into the Republika Srpska than was the case previously.

Voluntary surrender programme in Republika Srpska

11. On 17 July 2003, the authorities in the Republika Srpska created a committee charged with the task of offering incentives to surrender to persons indicted by the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia. The committee guarantees certain rights to indictees who surrender willingly, as well as to their immediate families. For instance, those who surrender in this way are promised permanent monthly aid of US$ 200 and their families are promised $250 monthly in addition to paid air travel between Belgrade and Amsterdam three times annually.

Attacks against SFOR and SFOR operational activities

12. Over the reporting period, there were no significant acts of violence directed against SFOR personnel.

13. SFOR continued to monitor possible terrorist-related threats and to collect illegally held weapons throughout the country. Both in efforts to persuade civilians to surrender weapons voluntarily and in targeted searches to confiscate deliberately hidden weapons, July 2003 has been a fruitful month.

14. Following the explosion of the Derventa weapon storage site NV 039 on 20 June 2003, SFOR completed the destruction of all remaining ammunition by 10 July. As part of a programme to secure weapons storage sites, SFOR has been recovering unstable ammunition from various sites throughout the Multinational Brigade (North-West) area of operation.

15. On 11 July 2003, SFOR assisted local police in the Republika Srpska with security and provided helicopter support for distinguished visitors at the annual Potocari ceremony, which was concluded without incident.

16. On the occasion of the fortieth Games of the Young Balkan Republics, in Visegrad and of the sixtieth anniversary of the battle of Sutjeska, SFOR provided back-up support. Both events were peaceful.

17. On 18 July 2003, SFOR assured the security of the Prosecutor, Carla Del Ponte, during her visit to Banja Luka.

Compliance by the parties

18. Several open-source reports describe the financial problems confronting the Entity Armed Forces. The Defence Reform Commission is proposing legislative changes and the Joint Military Commission, under the supervision of the Commander of SFOR through the Chiefs of Staff Defence Meetings, is helping the armed forces in preparing detailed restructuring plans. So far, the Ministry of Defence of each entity has submitted a general outline plan for restructuring, insufficiently detailed for concrete implementation. The Defence Reform Commission and the Commander of SFOR continue to press for measurable progress in this area.

19. On 1 July 2003, SFOR headquarters hosted the first course on professionalism for military students from the two entity militaries. The focus of the course was on ethical standards and on the individual responsibilities of military professionals. The gathering in a single forum of representatives from the two Entity Armed Forces was judged to be significant and the course was considered a success.

20. Over the reporting period, the Entity Armed Forces conducted normal training activities, in compliance with the military provisions of the Dayton Peace Agreement. There were no reports of missing weapons from weapons storage sites.

21. Training and operation activities by the Entity Armed Forces reached a total of 97; mine-clearing activities numbered 504; 57 inspections were carried out on weapons storage sites.

Conclusion

22. Over the reporting period, the security situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina remained stable and attempts to find a solution to the worrying financial difficulties of the Entity Armed Forces continued.

23. The anniversary of the Srebrenica massacre unfolded peacefully and a high-profile delegation from the Republika Srpska attended, a tangible sign of a trend towards normalization.